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Book Review: Applications of Social Research Methods to Questions in Information and Library Science

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Applications of Social Research Methods to Questions in Information and Library Science,
edited by Barbara M. Wildemuth, Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2009. 421 pp. \$50.00;
ISBN 1-59158-503-1

Edited by a professor in the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with the help of her colleague, former student, and many doctoral students at that school, this book is a sequential guide to research in information and library science. After encouraging readers to use research results to improve the practice of information professionals (in Part I), the authors showed them how to define their question and test their hypotheses (Part II) and decide which research design (Part III), data collection method (Part IV), and data analysis method (Part V) to use. Parts III - V offer brief overviews and examples of several appropriate methods. In the concluding chapter, Wildemuth presented three examples of the use of more than one method to make up for the brief, separate treatment of specific methods included in each chapter. Though the book was not intended to be read cover-to-cover, I did so to strengthen my knowledge and skills in library research. Anyone interested in research about librarianship can profit from this book. It is a good summary of research methods that is written clearly enough for people with little knowledge of research. I found Part II about developing questions and testing hypotheses and Part V about methods of data analysis especially helpful.

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